6th annual
AUTISM CONFERENCE
Building Bridges: Supportive Practices from Birth to Adulthood
FRIDAY, MAY 4TH, 2012
La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA
Dear Conference Attendee,

Welcome to our 6th annual autism conference, “Building Bridges: Supportive Practices, Birth to Adulthood.” Once again La Salle University and Green Tree Partnerships celebrate our ongoing, deeply-felt commitments to serving those on the Autism Spectrum, along with their families and the professionals who support them. Our conference demonstrates the various ways both institutions proudly devote themselves to this work.

Our keynote speaker today—Dr. Peter Gerhardt of the McCarton School in New York City—is one of the nation’s most knowledgeable professionals in the area of adolescents and young adults with autism. He combines intensive clinical/educational experience with a powerful research agenda that makes him uniquely positioned to speak to us about this complex, emotionally charged, and programmatically challenging stretch of the life span. Dr. Gerhardt, besides being an expert in this area of development, is also a passionate advocate who fully understands the perils and promises of the teen years for those on the Spectrum.

In addition to Dr. Gerhardt and the topic of adolescence/young adulthood, our workshop offerings also focus on early childhood, school-age children, college support programs, issues in teaching non-verbal children, social skills development, wrap-around programs, caregiver support... and more. We are extremely pleased by the depth and breadth of our workshop options this year.

We especially appreciate the participation of Nina Wall-Coté and others from the Bureau of Autism Services; no one has a better understanding of the autism landscape in Pennsylvania than Nina Wall-Coté and her team at BAS.

Take a moment to look through the conference brochure to see who our presenters are— and use lunch and other breaks to connect with them, as well as other parents, educators, therapists, academic researchers, and persons on the Spectrum. Be sure to browse the offerings from the La Salle Bookstore and visit the wonderful array of vendors. Over two dozen organizations and individuals are represented in our vendor area this year.

We hope that today’s conference will be an inspiration and source of new knowledge for those who care deeply about those who live with autism and their families. Enjoy the day!

Sincerely,

Thomas Latus, Ed.D.
Manager,
Green Tree Partnerships

Frank J. Mosca, Ph. D.
Associate Professor, Education
La Salle University
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INTERPRETATION SERVICES

We are pleased to offer interpretation services for Spanish language speakers and individuals in need of American Sign Language communication. This service is available during the keynote session.

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Conference Co-Chairs

Thomas Latus, Ed.D.
Manager
Green Tree Partnerships

Frank Mosca, Ph.D.
Associate Professor,
Education Department
La Salle University

Committee Members

Eric Mitchell, Ph.D.
Psychologist
Green Tree School

Jennifer McLaren
School Psychologist
Green Tree School

Herman Axelrod, Ph.D.
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Carole Patrylo, Ph.D.
Associate Director, Autism Program
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Jessica Yan
Director of Development
Green Tree School

Paul Haughton, Psy.D.
Director of Psychology
CORA Services

Rosemarie Manfredi, Psy.D.
Assistant Professor of Psychology
Chestnut Hill College, CORA Services

Conference Event Planner

Lavinia Awosanya
President
Event Mood, Corp.
CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Time          Session                              Location          
8:00am – 9:00am Registration                 Lobby              
9:00am – 9:15am Opening Remarks              Ballroom           
9:15am – 10:45am Keynote Presentation       Ballroom           
10:45am – 11:00am Break/Networking/Exhibits   Ballroom & Music Room 
11:00am – 12:30pm Session A Workshops       Various Locations   
12:30pm – 1:30pm Lunch/Networking/Exhibits   Ballroom & Music Room 
1:30pm – 3:00pm Session B Workshops         Various Locations   
3:00pm – 3:15pm Closing ceremony            Ballroom           

STUDENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Room 301 (3rd Floor)

Students will participate in engaging activities related to the development of functional academics, activities of daily living, communication, and socialization skills. Projects will relate to our theme of “Being a Responsible Citizen.” This programming is being done by La Salle junior undergraduate students working under the direction of their professors and La Salle seniors who have just completed their year of student teaching.

After parents sign in to the conference in the Union Lobby, they will be escorted to our classroom on the third floor, Union 301. Parents will sign in students, complete an emergency information form and be provided with the day’s schedule. Morning snacks will be provided. Students must be signed out before going to lunch and then signed in upon their return. Our program ends at 3. Parents will receive written communication regarding their student’s day.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

9:15am – 10:45am, Ballroom

Promoting Lives of Competency, Dignity and Quality: Evidence-based Practice and Adolescents and Adults on the Autism Spectrum

Presented by Dr. Peter Gerhardt, Scientific Council for the Organization for Autism Research (OAR)

Despite a rapidly growing body of knowledge regarding effective intervention with school age children with ASD, adult outcome studies indicate that the majority of individuals graduate to lives of limited independence and minimal community engagement. This presentation will provide a brief overview of some of the more relevant challenges to effective intervention with older individuals and offer recommendations toward improving outcomes leading to lives of competence, dignity, and quality.

After having attended this session, participants will be able to:
• Identify the characteristics of interventions based upon the principles of applied behavior associated with more positive adult outcomes
• Understand at least one application of common technology to support individuals in acquiring independent, community skills.
• Understand the impact of the concept of quality of life on transition programming and support.

Dr. Peter Gerhardt is the Director of Education, Upper School for the McCarton School and the Founding Chair of the Scientific Council for the Organization for Autism Research (OAR). Dr. Gerhardt has over 30 years experience utilizing the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis in support of adolescents and adults with ASD in educational, employment, residential and community-based settings. He is the author or co-author of articles and book chapters on the needs of adolescents and adults with autism spectrum disorder and he has presented nationally and internationally on this topic. Dr. Gerhardt serves on the Editorial Board of Behavior Analysis in Practice and on numerous professional advisory boards. Dr. Gerhardt received his doctorate from the Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey Graduate School of Education.

Special Guest Speaker

Nina Wall-Coté, MSS, LSW, is the Director for the Bureau of Autism Services in the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Prior to this position, she served as co-chair of the PA Autism Task Force. She was a founding member and first President of the Pennsylvania Action Coalition for Autism Services (PACAS), a statewide board of regional autism advocates.
The Building Bridges: Supportive Practices from Birth to Adulthood conference focuses on supports, interventions, services, strategies, and accommodations that enhance the lives of people on the Autism Spectrum. Workshops highlight research-based practices that help people with ASD and their families bridge the multiple transitions that they face in life.

Attendees may select one workshop in the morning and one in the afternoon. Forms can only be turned in after 3:00pm following the close of the conference.

Intended Audience
Workshops will benefit Psychologists, Social Workers, Mental Health Counselors, Educators, Principals, Teachers, Graduate Students, Parents and other practitioners within mental health and education who provide direct services and/or parent/teacher consultation for this population.

Continuing Education Credits
CORA Services is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for Psychologists (Sponsor #745); by the National Board for Certified Counselors to sponsor continuing education for counselors (Provider #5802) and by the Pennsylvania Department of Education to sponsor continuing education for certification under Act 48. The PA Board of Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors has approved the credit hours for this conference. CORA Services maintains responsibility for the program and its content. Certificates of attendance will be awarded to participants who attend the entire workshop and complete the evaluation form. Partial credits will not be awarded. Late arrival or early departure will preclude awarding of CE credits.

Credits Offered
**Act 48** - 5 credits  
**NBCC** - 5 credits  
**Psychology Credits** - 5 credits  
**SW, MFT & PC** - 5 credits

Individuals applying for professional credits must include PINs from the PA Department of Education on application form.

For questions regarding professional credits, please contact Tom Latus from Green Tree Partnerships at (215) 843-4528 or send an email to tlatus@greentreeschool.org.
Workshop 1: Understanding the Use of Positive Reinforcement Strategies and Practical Application of Strategies across School and Home Settings
Presented by Becky Horrocks, M.Ed. & Allison Garofalo M.A.,
Philadelphia Academy Charter School
Room 219, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: This presentation will teach the basic principles of Applied Behavior Analysis so they can be used in the school and home settings. It will emphasize a reduction in the use of punishment techniques through emphasis of positive reinforcement to teach replacement behaviors. It will introduce and examine the construct of maladaptive behavior(s) serving a function, and suggest function-based alternatives.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Learn about the basic principles of behavior
- Understand that punishment has limitations and is most effective when used with positive reinforcement
- Understand that the use of Positive reinforcement is the best practice to diminish negative behaviors
- Understand what the function of a behavior is
- Use the function of the behavior to change the maladaptive behavior in to an adaptive behavior by implementing replacement behaviors.

Becky Horrocks has worked with children and families who are affected by Autism since graduating with a BS. Ed. from Cabrini College in May of 1996. She began her career in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis as a 1:1 instructor of Discrete Trial Instruction at The Pathway School and Devereaux C.A.R.E.S. After Becky obtained her M.Ed. Cabrini College in May of 2000, she began work as an Early Intervention Teacher at Ken Crest using the Floor Time Model. From there, Becky taught Early Intervention at Easter Seals using the TEACH Method. Next, Becky worked as a Behavior Specialist at a wraparound Agency. In September 2008, Becky started teaching in the Autistic Support Classroom at The Philadelphia Academy Charter School where the principals of ABA are used to teach the classroom. Becky has been accepted to the Penn State certificate program to become a Board Certified Behavior Analyst. She will begin her studies next fall.

Allison Garofalo began her work with children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in 1996 when she began teaching Discrete trial Instruction. She earned her Masters in Counseling Psychology from Immaculata College in 1999, and began formal training as a Behavior Specialist with a WrapAround agency that placed a heavy emphasis on Applied Behavior Analysis. Allison co-presented research on Prepositions at the 2004 International Conference in Applied Behavior Analysis, and has worked closely with behavior analysts throughout her career. She received her certificate in ABA from Penn State University in 2009 and has completed her practicum requirements for the BCBA exam in January. Allison is currently the behavior analyst for The Philadelphia Academy Charter School in Philadelphia, PA.

Workshop 2: Creative Approaches to Enhancing Relationships with Nonverbal Children with ASD
Presented by Amy R. Hunter, MA, BC-DMT, LPC & Lauren Gagliardi, MA, MT-BC, Green Tree School
Room 207, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: Relating to nonverbal children can be challenging. This workshop will offer unconventional and non-threatening ways of connecting to children based upon theories of Creative Arts Therapy. These modalities are non-verbal, developmental, and playful. Participants will engage in creative experiences that can increase interpersonal awareness, empathy, reciprocity, and shared attention with nonverbal children.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Understand the strengths and needs of the non-verbal population
- Understand theories and goals of Creative Arts Therapies
- Learn non-verbal techniques used to relate to children with ASD
- Learn ways to use creative participation in non-verbal experiences

Amy Ruzic Hunter is a Licensed Professional Counselor and board-certified Dance/Movement Therapist specializing in the treatment of children on the Autistic spectrum and children with emotional & behavioral needs. She graduated from the Creative Arts in Therapy program at Drexel University in 2002, and has since worked with a variety of youth populations in Chicago and Philadelphia. She is currently an outpatient therapist at the Green Tree School, in addition to leading family therapy groups at the Philadelphia Family Court. Amy is a clinical supervisor for graduate students in the Dance/movement Therapy program at Drexel, and she is also mother to a 2-yr-old daughter.

Lauren Gagliardi is a board-certified Music Therapist who has worked with Green Tree School’s diverse student population, including the ASD, Early Intervention, Lower School and Upper School for four years. She studied Music Therapy at Drexel University’s Creative Arts Therapy program, and she has acted as music director of a children’s summer theater production for three years. Lauren’s thesis research is investigating the combination of Music Therapy with Dance/movement Therapy to promote organization and creativity in children on the
Workshop 3:
The Impact on the Family System and Individual with Autism when Transitioning into Adulthood
Presented by Donna Tonrey, Ph.D., La Salle University
Room 317, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: This workshop will focus on the impact on the individual with autism and their family system when transitioning into adulthood. This will include the importance of helping families assist with this transition, and helping to empower the individual toward optimal functioning.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
• Understanding the process of transition from school to adulthood and its implications
• Understanding the impact of transition on the individual
• Understanding the impact of transition on the family
• Learn how to help the family system to transition itself into the new reality
• Learn from others in the group through Open Discussion

Dr. Donna Tonrey is a licensed psychologist and a licensed marriage and family therapist. She is the Director of the Master’s Program in Clinical Counseling Psychology, which includes a master’s in Professional Clinical Counseling and Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) Program at La Salle University. Dr. Tonrey is currently the Chair of the PA State Board for Social Workers, Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors and has served on the board since 2004. She remains clinically active and is an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, providing clinical supervision for therapists. Dr. Tonrey served as President for the PA Association for Marriage and Family Therapy when licensing for Marriage and Family Therapists and Professional Counselors was passed in Pennsylvania. She also served on a national board as Treasurer for the Association for Marital and Family Therapy Regulatory Boards. Dr. Tonrey created and is presently involved in the continued development of the Family Building Projective Technique (FBPT), which is an interactive projective technique utilizing a systems approach to therapeutic practice.

Workshop 4:
Behavior Management and Psychopharmacology in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders
Presented by James Coplan, MD, Neurodevelopmental Pediatrics of the Main Line, PC
Room 217, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) frequently manifest maladaptive behavior. In this workshop we will describe the underlying neuropsychological deficits in ASD, explain how these deficits give rise to various maladaptive behaviors and provide a logical framework for responding to such behaviors, including behavioral methods and various medications.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
• Understand the 4 fundamental behavioral principles of positive and negative reinforcement, overcorrection, and token economies
• Understand the concept of cognitive rigidity as a driver of maladaptive behavior in persons with ASD, and identify the behavioral and pharmacological methods of benefit
• Be able to define Disregulation of attention, and identify behavioral and pharmacological methods of benefit
• Be able to define Disregulation of arousal, and identify behavioral and pharmacological methods of benefit
• Be able to define Disregulation of sleep, and identify behavioral and pharmacological methods of benefit

James Coplan, M.D., has over 3 decades of experience working with children with developmental disabilities. Dr. Coplan is a Fellow in the American Academy of Pediatrics, and is one of a handful of physicians with dual subspecialty certification in both Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics and Neurodevelopmental Disabilities. He is also a member of the Child Neurology Society, and Clinical Associate Professor of Child Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Coplan has a lengthy bibliography of published works in the area of early language development, and has recently published a book for caregivers and professionals working with children on the autism spectrum (Making Sense of Autistic Spectrum Disorders; Bantam-Dell, 2010). Dr. Coplan is also the sibling of an individual with developmental disabilities. Dr. Coplan incorporates this personal experience into his clinical, research, and teaching activities, in a way that benefits his patients and their families, his colleagues, and the general public.

Workshop 5:
If I’m So Stressed, How Can I Help the Autistic Person?
Presented by Eric Mitchell, Ph.D. Green Tree School
& Zakia Robbins, MS, Green Tree School
Room 228, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: Stress associated with helper roles in the ASD community can stem from high levels of responsibility, excessive demands, and even heartache during times of struggle. However, there are strategies that individuals can employ to decrease stress by taking an active role in managing stress. Helpers can gain more satisfaction from their roles and provide better
Young Children on the Spectrum
Presented by Steven Glazier M.A., Psychologist, Private Practice
Room 229, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: Neurobiological factors make it difficult for children on the spectrum to show and share their ideas, thoughts and feelings. This can compromise their emotional development and social functioning. This workshop will highlight the challenges that our children face in this area and what we can do to support them.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Recognize the stages and themes of emotional development during the first 5 years of life.
- Identify the special challenges children on the spectrum have in this process.
- Learn specific strategies that caregivers and professionals can use to facilitate emotional development.
- Understand the role of imaginative play in emotional development.
- Learn to recognize when problem behavior may be due to typical emotional developmental issues, rather than the diagnosis

Steven is a psychologist who has been working with children and adolescents with special needs for the past 25 years. Since 1995, he has been in private practice, specializing in treating disorders of relating and communicating. Steve is a Certificate holder in the DIR®/Floortime Model and has served as a Faculty Facilitator. He is a faculty member in the Early Childhood Mental Health Certificate Program at Widener University and he has served on the Philadelphia Preschool Early Intervention Autism Advisory Board and the board of the Philadelphia Chapter of the World Association for Infant Mental Health. Steven consults with local school districts and early intervention providers, mentors and supervises multi-disciplinary professionals, and provides direct treatment to children and families.

Workshop 7:
The Autism Spirit: Pathways to Connection through the Heart
Presented by Lea Hill, Author, Speaker, Autism Advocate
Room 326, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: The autism community is flooded with information about the science and behavioral aspects of this prevalent disorder but there’s something missing. The Autism Spirit fills the gap and brings a new aspect to a deeper, more loving connection with the autistic person in your life.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Understand how to lessen the burden of your own feelings of guilt, frustration, and disempowerment as a parent or caregiver of someone on the spectrum
- Understand how to create harmony within the family and

Workshop 6:
Promoting the Emotional Development of Young Children on the Spectrum

Presented by Ms. Robbins

Purpose: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Understand how specific stressors related to working with ASD can affect helpers.
- Identify contributing factors to stress in our work and that of others in the ASD community.
- Learn ways to use self-care strategies that may assist in managing stress, increase resiliency, and enhance self-control.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Understand the factors related to higher levels of stress.
- Learn how specific stressors related to working with ASD can affect helpers.
- Identify contributing factors to stress of our work and that of others in the ASD community.
- Learn ways to use self-care strategies that may assist in managing stress and maximizing effectiveness in helping with ASD.

Ms. Robbins hails from North Philadelphia, where her understanding of the challenges children face in urban settings developed first-hand. Her desire to serve others blossomed through dance education, and led her to higher education. Ms. Robbins’ research interests began while working toward her Master’s at Chestnut Hill College, where she investigated a strengths-based approach for families coping with ADHD. She helped to develop an innovative pilot program for children affected by ADHD and other diagnoses, which has blossomed into a leading model of service delivery in the Philadelphia area. Her interests in ASD have developed more fully since coming to Green Tree School in 2010, where she currently directs an intensive program specialized for comprehensive services for autistic children. She is currently pursuing her doctoral degree in Organizational Leadership and Development, and her dissertation proposal is now pending approval, entitled “The Factors Leading to Turnover of Masters-Level Clinicians in BHRS.”

Dr. Eric Mitchell has been working therapeutically with ASD and related disorders in children and families since he was a teenager. After graduating from the University of Vermont, he moved on to Rutgers University for his masters degree, and then to the University of Pennsylvania for his doctoral studies. Continuing to gain experience in the ASD community, he accepted a post-doctoral fellowship specializing in ASD and related disorders with emphasis on cutting edge ABA interventions with eclectic service delivery. With many years of experience as a psychologist, educator, evaluator, school psychologist, consultant, and administrator, Dr. Mitchell is very active as a consulting psychologist around the Philadelphia area, both as a professional and an advocate. Dr. Mitchell was the 2009 Holroyd Lecturer for LaSalle University, with a focus on ASD. He strives to build collaborative partnerships between families, schools, universities, mental health agencies, professionals, and others in the ASD community.

Dr. Mitchell hails from North Philadelphia, where his understanding of the challenges children face in urban settings developed first-hand. His desire to serve others blossomed through dance education, and led him to higher education. Dr. Mitchell’s research interests began while working toward his Master’s at Chestnut Hill College, where he investigated a strengths-based approach for families coping with ADHD. He helped to develop an innovative pilot program for children affected by ADHD and other diagnoses, which has blossomed into a leading model of service delivery in the Philadelphia area. His interests in ASD have developed more fully since coming to Green Tree School in 2010, where he currently directs an intensive program specialized for comprehensive services for autistic children. He is currently pursuing his doctoral degree in Organizational Leadership and Development, and his dissertation proposal is now pending approval, entitled “The Factors Leading to Turnover of Masters-Level Clinicians in BHRS.”

Support when they understand how working with ASD relates to stress, and utilize strategies to manage stress, increase resiliency, and enhance self-control.

Workshop 6:
Promoting the Emotional Development of Young Children on the Spectrum

Presented by Dr. Mitchell

Purpose: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Understand the factors related to higher levels of stress.
- Learn how specific stressors related to working with ASD can affect helpers.
- Identify contributing factors to stress of our work and that of others in the ASD community.
- Learn ways to use self-care strategies that may assist in managing stress and maximizing effectiveness in helping with ASD.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Understand the factors related to higher levels of stress.
- Learn how specific stressors related to working with ASD can affect helpers.
- Identify contributing factors to stress of our work and that of others in the ASD community.
- Learn ways to use self-care strategies that may assist in managing stress and maximizing effectiveness in helping with ASD.
dispel frustrating (and potentially violent) behaviors
- Learn ways to facilitate socialization by giving the person with autism a “voice” that encourages self-expression
- Learn ways to heal the connection with the autistic person in a way that goes beyond verbal or written words
- Develop ways to feel better about yourself so that the person with ASD feels better too!

Lea M. Hill is an author, intuitive medium, energy healing practitioner and autism advocate. As a child who could not and/or would not express her feelings, Lea has an empathic connection with those on the autism spectrum. She dedicates her life to giving voice to those who need to be heard, whether they have verbal capabilities or not. Lea is the author of the forthcoming book, The Society of Sylphs, a young adult fantasy novel involving a sylph (an elemental being of the air) and a nonverbal boy with autism. She also hosts a website for kids where anyone from ages 5-18 can share their fantasy artwork and stories at www.SylphSociety.com. She holds a B.S. in marketing and an MBA from Northeastern University. She is also a Reiki Master, Certified Angel Healing Practitioner®, and a Vortex Healing® Energy Healing Practitioner.

Workshop 8:
Next Steps into Adolescence: Supporting Parents and Caretakers through Turbulent Times
Presented by Keiran Rump, Ph.D., James E. Connell, Ph.D., Debra L. Dunn, Esq., Eron Friedlaender, M.D., MPH, Caitlin Rice, The Center for Autism Research at CHOP
Room 315, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: This multimedia presentation will explore the impact of ASD on an already challenging part of development – adolescence. In particular, physical changes, brain development, co-morbid conditions (including anxiety, executive functioning difficulties, seizures, and sleep disorders), social relationships, sexuality, and transition issues will be discussed in addition to the support needs for parents.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Begin to understand the impact of adolescence on all individuals with and without an ASD diagnosis
- Be prepared for the physical, and emotional changes that can occur during this time period
- Understand the medical and emotional needs of the individual with ASD
- Understand how to determine if medication is indicated for an individual with ASD
- Understand the educational and behavioral needs of children as they enter adolescence
- Learn ways to access resources in your community to especially support transition needs

Keiran Rump, Ph.D. is a clinical autism fellow at the Center for Autism Research. She completed her Master of Science degree in psychology at Villanova University in 2003 and earned her doctorate in both clinical and developmental psychology from the University of Pittsburgh in 2010. During her doctoral training under the mentorship of Mark Strauss, Ph.D., Dr. Rump investigated the development of emotion recognition and understanding in children, adolescents, and adults with autism. She also conducted comprehensive evaluations of toddlers and children with suspected autism spectrum disorders. Dr. Rump completed her clinical internship at the Mailman Center for Child Development at the University of Miami School of Medicine with a particular focus on neurodevelopmental disabilities and comprehensive neuropsychological evaluations of children with chronic medical conditions. Dr. Rump’s clinical and research interests include emotion processing in individuals with autism spectrum disorders, how this changes with development, and how this relates to the assessment and treatment of comorbid depression and anxiety disorders.

James E. Connell, Ph.D. is a nationally certified school psychologist and a board certified behavior analyst. Dr. Connell earned his master’s and Ph.D. at Louisiana State University and completed his internship at May Institute in Massachusetts, a nationally recognized autism center founded by Jaques and Marie May, parents of twins with autism. Dr. Connell worked at Children’s Seashore House in the mid 1990s where he developed and successfully implemented behavioral therapies to reduce severe behavior. For the past 15 years, he has worked tirelessly with educators, mental health professionals, and community members to ensure that all children have equal access to high quality education, mental health services and the rights and privileges afforded by our society. Dr. Connell recently taught in the School Psychology program at Temple University and has now joined the Center for Autism Research to continue his life-long mission of advocating for, and intervening on behalf of all children, specifically including special needs populations.

Debra L. Dunn, Esq. was an attorney for a litigation firm in Philadelphia until learning that her son was diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. From that time forward, she became active in a number of local disability organizations, including ASCEND Group, the Asperger Syndrome Alliance for Greater Philadelphia; Autism Society of America, Greater Philadelphia Chapter; and The Right to Education Task Force of Delaware County. She has used her experience as an attorney to help parents understand and be active participants in the IEP process and has participated in PDE’s monitoring of special education programs in public schools in Delaware County. She is currently the Outreach Director for the Center for Autism Research (CAR) at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, where she coordinates recruitment of research participants, plans events of interest to the autism community and the community at large, participates in autism educational events for a variety of audiences, and organizes CAR’s community fundraising program.
Erin Friedlaender, M.D., MPH works at the Center for Autism Research where her work focuses on access to and delivery of quality services to children with autism spectrum disorders. In addition, she is an Attending Physician in the Emergency Department at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia. Dr. Friedlaender completed formal training in Child Advocacy and Injury Prevention through an NIH training grant, during which time she earned a Masters in Public Health. She has investigated patterns of healthcare utilization by victims of child maltreatment, studied risk factors for injuries within the built environment, and served as Principal Investigator of the Injury Free Coalition for Kids in Philadelphia.

Caitlin Rice is a graduate social work student from Bryn Mawr placed at the Center for Autism Research during the 2011-2012 academic year.

Parent Panel

Renee Henderson, mother of Nasya, started Autism Sharing and Parenting, a parent support organization in Philadelphia in 2003. Renee provided therapeutic intervention to Nasya, teaching her academic skills. Although Nasya has developmental language deficiencies, she is able to do math computations, read and write. Renee feels that parents should be aware of the potential in their children in order to properly advocate for them.

Ann Salomon is married and the proud mother of two teenage children. Her youngest child, Eric age 14, is on the autism spectrum. She is active the Local Right to Education Task Force, Camp Advisory Board Member at the Variety Club, President of SEPAC, (Special Education Parent Advisory Council - Wissahickon School District’s Special Education parent group), and advocacy and inclusion programs for all children in Montgomery County. She enjoys family time and is also a registered nurse.

Tom Furey is the proud parent of 10 year old, Grace, and Tommy, almost 12 years old diagnosed with PDD NOS. He is also the step dad to Will, 11 years old and Matt, 15 years old diagnosed with Asperger’s. Tom serves on the Board of Directors at the Pathway School in Jeffersonville, and has been there since 2007. Tom is a retirement plan and fiduciary consulting analyst for major corporations.

Isabelle Mosca lives in Ventnor, New Jersey with her husband Ken, and 12 year-old twins, Kyle and Isabelle. She is the Executive Director and founder of FACES Autism Support Network, which has four chapters in South Jersey. FACES education and support programs include art classes, family picnics and special events, as well as the 9th Annual Blow Bubbles 4 Autism. Isabelle helps families and professionals to see the possibilities of autism by offering uplifting stories of humor and hope. The twins are the authors of Adventure to Autism Planet, a new children’s book from the sibling’s point of view.

Jonathan Fink along with his wife, daughter and son Ben live in Philadelphia. Ben is diagnosed with Asperger’s Syndrome and is 13 years old. Ben attended the Russell Byers Charter School in the city since the age of 5 and graduated this past spring. Ben is attending the Philadelphia School. Jonathan is a REALTOR® with Keller Williams Center City Philadelphia. Feel free to call him or email him to talk about anything/anytime!

Workshop 9:

Special Education Law

Presented by Joshua M. Kershenbaum, Esq. and Maria Vetter, Frankel & Kershenbaum, LLC

Purpose: Children with special needs have special rights in school, and understanding those rights is essential for anyone who advocates for them. This session will provide participants with the essentials of federal and state special education law and will offer practical and effective advice on how to help families navigate the often daunting and complex special education system.

Concepts that will be covered will include: eligibility for special education services, obtaining and interpreting evaluations, understanding and critiquing IEPs and 504 plans, discipline of students with disabilities, transition planning, dispute resolution, effective IEP meetings, obtaining private school placements at District expense, and more.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:

- Understand the basis of eligibility under state and federal special education law.
- Understand the rights of eligible students to a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment.
- Learn effective advocacy strategies for children who need special education services.
- Learn to avoid the most common pitfalls that Parents encounter when navigating the special education system.

Josh Kershenbaum is a founding member of the law firm of Frankel & Kershenbaum, LLC in West Conshohocken, Pennsylvania. Josh represents children, families and small businesses in matters ranging from special education law, child-centered personal injury to special needs estate planning, the Constitutional rights of children and LGBT youth and adult rights and civil litigation. Josh’s work on behalf of children with special needs and their families includes counseling and representation with respect to all forms of disputes over the provision of educational services, such as those arising under The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 and other federal and state statutes. Accordingly, Josh represents clients at IEP meetings and administrative due process hearings, in settlement negotiations with school districts and in state and federal litigation. Josh is admitted to practice in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. He is a 2006 cum laude graduate of Temple University Beasly School of Law and a 1996 magna cum laude graduate of Amherst College. In 2010 and 2011, he was recognized by Thomson Reuters, published annually in Philadelphia magazine, as a Super Lawyers® Rising Star.

Maria Vetter is Frankel & Kershenbaum, LLC’s Education Consultant/Advocate. As an advocate, Maria works with families of students with special needs, from diagnosis and early intervention, to school age and transitioning out of school into independent living. She helps families understand the educational process and aids them in securing the specialized
services their children require. She also supports parents and students by attending IEP meetings, conferences, mediations and team meetings to advocate for the students’ rights. She possesses a wealth of experience working with children who are challenged by special needs, with a primary focus on children who have Autism Spectrum Disorder, Asperger’s Syndrome and language-based learning differences. Maria also has considerable expertise in addressing a wide range of other needs and disabilities, including gifted support, traumatic brain injury, Fragile X Syndrome, Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Multiple Personality Disorder, Bipolar Disorder, Down Syndrome, Seizure Disorder, Reactive Attachment Disorder, Physical Disabilities and various behavioral issues. Maria received her Bachelor of Science degree in teaching from the Pennsylvania State University, graduating with honors.

**Workshop 10:**
Meeting the Needs of Individuals with Autism: Considerations for the Future

*Presented by Nina Wall-Coté, MSS, LSW, Bureau of Autism Services, PA Department of Public Welfare*

*Room 313, Olney Hall, La Salle University*

**Purpose:** During this session, the Bureau of Autism Services will share information about its key initiatives, including: PA autism census data, the PA Autism Needs Assessment findings and recommendations, the ASERT Collaboratives regional projects, and information about the Adult Autism Waiver and the Adult Community Autism Program (ACAP). BAS will also share additional resources and collaborative efforts underway to help individuals with autism improve their quality of life, achieve independence, and become contributing members of their communities.

**Objectives:** As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Identify implications of regional census data for systems supporting individuals with an ASD.
- Understand the findings and recommendations of the PA Autism Needs Assessment study.
- Compare key components of BAS adult programs, to help inform individuals transitioning to the adult system and their families. Identify current initiatives, trainings and resources developed by BAS and the regional ASERT collaborative efforts.

Nina Wall-Coté, MSS, LSW, is the Director for the Bureau of Autism Services in the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. Prior to this position, she served as co-chair of the PA Autism Task Force. She was a founding member and first President of the Pennsylvania Action Coalition for Autism Services (PACAS), a statewide board of regional autism advocates. She has served as a Board member for Pennsylvania Protection and Advocacy, and served for seven years as the Information and Referral Director for the Autism Society of Greater Philadelphia. A graduate of Bryn Mawr College’s Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research, Ms. Wall-Coté worked as a family, child and adolescent therapist with a specific focus on clinical work with families of children and adolescents with ASD and other behavioral health challenges. Ms. Wall-Coté is the parent of a young adult with autism.

**Workshop 1:**
Working with Families with a Member on the Spectrum

*Presented by Scott Browning, Ph.D., Chestnut Hill College*

*Room 315, Olney Hall, La Salle University*

**Purpose:** This workshop is an examination of family therapy with a family when at least one member is on the spectrum. A trait scale (developed by the speaker) is utilized to assist therapists in having a clear direction to assist families in this position. Case studies will be utilized.

**Objectives:** As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
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SESSION B WORKSHOPS
1:30-3:00

• Be able to provide therapy to families with a ASD member
• Be able to utilize the ASD Trait Scale
• Be able to assist couples in discussing differences in their perception of their ASD member
• Be able to learn specific interventions available after the workshop
• Be able to learn how to incorporate all family members into treatment

Scott Browning, Ph.D., is a professor in the doctoral clinical psychology program at Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia and has been a leader in stepfamily therapy both nationally and internationally for over twenty years. As a scholar, teacher, and clinician, Dr. Browning has explored the intricacies of treating stepfamilies and has provided advanced training in the treatment of stepfamilies to clinicians and graduate students both nationally and abroad. He is the author of numerous chapters and articles on the topics of stepfamilies, empathy, codependency and family therapy training practices.

Workshop 2:
Everyday Strategies TM: Autism and the Things it Teaches
Presented by Sabra Townsend
Room 313, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: Living with and raising a person who has autism can present unexpected challenges. This workshop will present information that can help you and your family make it through the day. Gain ideas that you can adapt for life in and out of your house. Come to see and hear practical, hands-on, kid-tested tips and ideas that can help in ways, big and small.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
• Learn how to think creatively about situations that otherwise may prove challenging
• Learn how to enjoy the shared experiences living with a person on the autism spectrum

Sabra Townsend left the corporate sector after her son (now 14 yrs old) was born with a physical disability, then later diagnosed with Autism. Recently employed by the Phila. Dept. of Public Health and co-chair of the Special Needs Work Group for 9 years, she has attended numerous conferences on issues affecting children with special needs to keep her knowledge up-to-date. Topics have included sensory regulation and special education laws. She was also an instrumental member of the DPW statewide PA Autism Task Force and works with the city and state to improve services for children with special health care needs.

Workshop 3:
Transition to Adulthood: Developing Collaboration Across Service Systems
Presented by Rosemarie Manfredi, Psy.D. & Paul Haughton, Psy.D., CORA Services
Room 229, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: This workshop will describe a cross-systems model of collaboration addressing transition needs of individuals with ASDs. The presenters will describe how academic institutions, community services, and the educational system can work together to help both individuals with ASDs and the community at large succeed in this transition process.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
• Understand the current state of service delivery for young adults with autism
• Learn the important reasons for the need for cross-systems collaboration in addressing the needs of autistic young adults as they transition out of the school context
• Understand the important role of functional assessment in establishing the transitional needs of the autistic young adult.
• Learn the four key components within one cross-collaboration model
• Learn of opportunities at the local level for innovative expansion of cross collaboration within already existing systems (Audience discussion and participation on this objective will be encouraged)

Dr. Manfredi received her B.A. in Psychology with a minor in Health Studies from Montclair State University. She received her M.A. and Psy.D. in Clinical Psychology from Widener University. She is a licensed psychologist and certified school psychologist. Her clinical and scholarly interests are in areas of neurodevelopmental disorders, especially autism spectrum disorders, intellectual and learning disabilities, genetic and neurological disorders, and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. With a background in school psychology and neuropsychology, she is particularly interested in conducting diagnostic and neuropsychological evaluations, as well as designing and implementing behavioral and social skills interventions. Dr. Manfredi is also interested in brain-behavior relationships, biofeedback, lifespan services, and evidence-based practices. Dr. Manfredi has presented at a number of conferences, both locally and internationally. She is a member of the American Psychological Association (Divisions 33 and 40), the Philadelphia Society for Clinical Psychologists, the Philadelphia Neuropsychology Society, and the International Society for Autism Research.

Dr. Haughton received his Psy.D. from Hahnemann University and his school certification from Bryn Mawr College. Before coming to CORA Services, Dr. Haughton was a staff psychologist at Mt. Sinai Hospital (Hartford, CT), Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic, and the Mapleton Center of the Devereux Foundation. As Director of Psychology at CORA, he has supervised school psychologist within the nonpublic
and charter school divisions, as well as the internship program. With Dr. Manfredi, he has helped to develop the Autism Initiative between CORA and Chestnut Hill College, where he is also an adjunct faculty member.

Workshop 4:
What Helps ASD Caregivers Sink, Survive or Thrive?
Presented by Peter Doehring, Ph.D.
& Rachael Simms, M.Ed., Foundations Behavioral Health
Room 326, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: Effective caregiving can make a tremendous difference for a person with ASD. We briefly describe the many important roles that caregivers play, the kinds of crises they face, and research on barriers to care and unmet needs. We offer recommendations for caregivers, and for professionals providing services and leadership in program development.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
• Understand the characteristics of the person with ASD that help or hinder caregiving, and how this knowledge can help set treatment priorities
• Understand the characteristics of the support network that help or hinder caregiving, and how this knowledge can help set policy priorities
• Understand the characteristics and circumstances of the caregivers that help or hinder caregiving, and how this knowledge can help individualize support for caregivers

Over the past 20 years, Peter has worked as a researcher, clinician and advocate for children with ASD and other developmental disabilities. He has led the development of programs that seek to integrate research, training, and policy, in health and in education, at the regional or state level, in Canada and in the United States. This included 9 year as Director of Delaware Autism Program, and 2 ½ years as Director of Regional Programs for the Center for Autism Research and the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia/University of Pennsylvania. Peter joined Foundations Behavioral Health in 2011 to develop an innovative in-patient treatment program for children and adolescents with ASD and related disabilities who are in behavioral crisis. In 2011, he published an edited volume reviewing evidence based treatments for autism, and in 2012 will complete a second edited volume describing strategies for developing services, training, research, and policy at the regional and national level. He is also the father of a child with multiple and complex disabilities.

Rachael Simms, M.Ed. has nearly 15 years of experiencing the field of Autism. She began her journey working as an Autistic Support Teacher. Since then she has expanded her experience working in a variety of roles assisting individuals, families, schools and community programs in supporting the needs of the individuals living with ASD, specializing in HFA. Her roles include; professional trainer and consultant, ASD Life Coach, behavioral specialist, social skills group facilitator, camp director, curriculum writer, etc. Currently she adjuncts at Gwynedd-Mercy College and enjoys her full-time position as the Assistant Director of Autism Services at Foundations Behavioral Health in Doylestown, PA.

Workshop 5:
Post-Secondary Options and Supports for Autistic Individuals
Panel of Presenters: Diana D’Argenio, Drexel University, Nanette Edelken-Cooperman, Ed.D., Saint Joseph’s University, Kristina Patrick, BCaBA, Drexel University, Eileen Sabbatino, Ed.D., Saint Joseph’s University Facilitator: Eric R. Mitchell, Ph.D., Green Tree School; Private Practice
Room 228, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: As autistic students enter post-secondary settings, they present with a wide variety of concerns. This panel will interactively discuss ASD research and programs at Drexel and St. Joseph’s Universities around the transition to adulthood, public school programs, what employers need to know, employee training, mentor training, academic supports to attend college, 1-1 peer mentoring, self-advocacy, neurodiversity, social skill development, setting and reaching goals, obtaining services, strengths of autistic individuals, and implementing autism support programs. We will discuss how such strategies may decrease dropout rates, increase positive college experiences, and improve chances for success outside of higher education.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
• Understand the needs of ASD students as they transition to post-secondary settings.
• Understand strategies/programs implemented at institutions which have demonstrated successful experiences for autistic individuals.
• Learn the role of various resources in the successful transition from school to adulthood for autistic individuals with varying levels of ability/disability.
• Understand how to advocate for effective types of services in a variety of post-secondary settings.
• Learn ways to overcome common challenges in providing services, integrating systems, and providing aid while confidentially respecting autistic individuals’ autonomy, family involvement and strengths.

Diana D’Argenio is an undergraduate psychology major in her junior year at Drexel University. She has served as the Drexel Autism Support Program Coordinator since early 2011, and volunteers for the Thomas Jefferson University Hospital Neurology Center as a research assistant in a study investigating the accuracy with which epileptic seizure patients report upon their seizures. After she obtains her bachelor’s degree, Diana plans to pursue a PhD in clinical neuropsychology.
Nanette Edeiken-Cooperman, Ed.D.: I have worked in the field of Special Education since 1977 when I received my Masters of Education in Special Education from Temple University, Philadelphia, PA. I began my career working with students aged 16-21 years with low-incidence disabilities who were participating in a Life Skills program in the Philadelphia School District. My interests have remained working with this population as well as researching different aspects of the education of students with low-incidence disabilities and the facilitation of the transition process from high school to post-school life. I am currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education at Saint Joseph’s University teaching undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation classes. My educational background includes a BA in Psychology from Villanova University, an MEd in Special Education from Temple University, and an EdD from Saint Joseph’s University.

Kristina Patrick, BCaBA is a clinical neuropsychology PhD student, working under the mentorship of Dr. Felicia Hurewitz and Dr. Doug Chute at Drexel University. After receiving her bachelor’s degree in Psychology and Theatre Arts from Marquette University, Kristina worked for several years as an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) therapist at Wisconsin Early Autism Project (WEAP). Kristina earned her certification in behavior analysis in 2009 and worked as a Behavior Analyst for families of children with autism in Chicago. During this time, Kristina also worked as a research assistant at Northwestern University, researching language development in typically developing children and children with autism spectrum disorders. At Drexel University, Kristina serves as a DASP trainer, providing supervision for peer mentors and leading Self-Advocacy and Social Skills (SASS) seminars for students with ASD.

Eileen Sabbatino, Ed.D.: I began my career in 1972 in Special Education and spent twenty years teaching students of all abilities and disabilities in K-12 schools around the country. Twelve years ago, I began teaching undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation courses in higher education, and am currently an Asst. Professor at Saint Joseph’s University in the Special Education Department where I teach courses concerning educating students with disabilities, as well as promoting positive inclusive environments. My current research interests include: educational programs for students with autism, the transition process from high school to post-school life for students with low-incidence disabilities and ASD, facilitating transitions for students with disabilities to vocational settings, as well as transition to college for students with ASD. My educational background includes: BS in Education at SUNY Buffalo College, MA in Special Education at University of New Mexico, and Ed.D. in Educational Innovation and Leadership at Wilmington University.

Dr. Eric Mitchell has been working therapeutically with ASD and related disorders in children and families since he was a teenager. After graduating from the University of Vermont, he moved on to Rutgers University for his masters degree, and then to the University of Pennsylvania for his doctoral studies. Continuing to gain experience in the ASD community, he accepted a post-doctoral fellowship specializing in ASD and related disorders with emphasis on cutting edge ABA interventions with eclectic service delivery. With many years of experience as a psychologist, educator, evaluator, school psychologist, consultant, and administrator, Dr. Mitchell is very active as a consulting psychologist around the Philadelphia area, both as a professional and an advocate. Dr. Mitchell was the 2009 Holroyd Lecturer for LaSalle University, with a focus on ASD. He strives to build collaborative partnerships between families, schools, universities, mental health agencies, professionals, and others in the ASD community.

Workshop 6: Your Children Can Be Social: Using Peers As Change Agents In Socialization Groups
Presented by Erica Schollin, M.S.E.D, New York Child Resource Center, Inc.
Room 217, Olney Hall, La Salle University

Purpose: Children with autism spectrum disorders often present with social behavior deficits. At an early age these skill deficits can be addressed using peer mediated interventions. There is a rich body of research that suggests these strategies can be an effective way to teach these critical skills. This workshop will present a historical perspective of the research in this area and provide attendees with an implementation model that demonstrates best practice interventions for young children with autism.

Objectives: As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
• Understand the impact of peer-mediated interventions on remediating social behavior deficits in young learners with autism spectrum disorders.
• Examine and defend the use of teacher-manipulated antecedent/consequent behavior to teach pro-social behaviors.
• Identify strategies to facilitate peer interactions.
• Analyze the use of paraprofessionals as shadows.
• Be able to justify the use of peers as change agents to aide in the acquisition of social behavior.

Erica Schollin, M.S.Ed., Program Supervisor: Erica Schollin has worked at NYCRC using Applied Behavior Analysis with individuals with autism ages birth-3 for over 7 years. She has worked within the autism population for over 13 years. Erica is a certified Early Childhood Special Education teacher who earned her Master’s Degree in Special Education from Adelphi University in 2000. Under her supervision are over 100 staff members that include certified classroom teachers, certified home based instructors, teacher assistants and related service therapists. All staff members have been trained with an intensive ABA training protocol developed by Erica Schollin in conjunction with the other NYCRC supervisor. Erica has also developed and instructed over 25 ongoing training workshops and in-services for
her center and home-based staff in areas of ABA (curriculum and implementation), autism, classroom management, child development and inclusion. Erica also lives in Brooklyn, NY with her husband James and her three beautiful children Mikayla, Aiden and Ryan ages 2-13.

**Workshop 7:**

**Yoga and Art as Creative Bridges for Autism**

Presented by Reverend Robin Schwoyer, HeARTs for Autism® and Happy HeARTs Yoga, LLC

Room 207, Olney Hall, La Salle University

**Purpose:** As we seek to support and enhance the quality of life for persons and families living with Autism, research and experience demonstrate the usefulness of creative expression and fitness as ways to tend to the whole person. Art and movement are wonderful holistic strategies complementing other interventions.

**Objectives:** As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Learn simple breathing techniques for stress reduction
- Observe and experience easy yoga movements useful in various settings
- Understand how mindfulness improves focus and attention
- Understand how Art is a powerful way to integrate and advance educational & therapeutic interventions
- Understand how to promote the beauty and uniqueness of our Spectrum persons through creative expression.

**Robin** is a renaissance style woman, being an artist, author, inspirational speaker and retreat facilitator who enjoys sharing messages of love, creativity and empowerment. She is an ordained Episcopal Minister and Holistic Wellness Practitioner, certified in several healing systems empowering individuals to create more healthy and vibrant lifestyles. She sees clients in her Abundant Life Mission practice in Newtown, PA. Robin is the creator and director of HeARTs for Autism®, a nonprofit organization founded in 2005, serving children and families living with the Autism Spectrum condition through Art programs, Education and Advocacy. She founded Happy HeARTs Yoga, a holistic children’s and family fitness program, specializing in special needs children in 2009. Robin is a certified Reflexologist, Therapeutic Touch practitioner, Integrated Energy Therapy® Master Instructor, Reiki Master Teacher, American Red Cross Certified Life Guard and Special needs Swim instructor, certified Children’s Yoga & 200 hour Vinyasa Yoga Teacher, plus over 500 hours training in Autism, Occupational therapy, Speech therapy and Social Skills. Robin has a great passion for helping people live vitally, creatively and abundantly. She is married with 3 amazing children, residing in Bucks County, PA.

**Workshop 8:**

**Sexuality and Sexuality Instruction with Individuals on the Autism Spectrum**


Room 317, Olney Hall, La Salle University

**Purpose:** Individuals on the Autism Spectrum are sexual beings. However, individual interest in sex or in developing an intimate sexual relationship with another person varies widely across (and within) individuals at all ability levels. Unfortunately, despite much discussion about decision-making skills in the self-determination literature there continues to be “lack of evidence [supporting the] effectiveness of sex education and training for persons with developmental disabilities” (Duval, 2002) which behavior analysis can provide. This workshop will provide a brief overview of issues associated with sexuality education and the role behavior analysis can play in this complex and important area.

**Objectives:** As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Be able to provide an overview of the three primary components of sexuality education
- Be able to understand the vital relationship between sexuality education and individual safety. Be able to identify a minimum of three methods of behavioral analytic intervention that have implications in support evidence-based practice in this area.

*See Bio on page 7.*

**Workshop 9:**

**Transition to Adult Life: Advocating for Adolescents with ASD**

Presented by Rosemary Mullaly, Esquire, Chestnut Hill Autism Initiative Network

Room 219, Olney Hall, La Salle University

**Purpose:** Parents and professionals will become better informed regarding the transition to adult life legal mandates. It will provide suggestions on how to ascertain a student’s present levels of functioning related to transition goals and will explain how to best advocate for adolescents in planning transition that will provide meaningful options for life after school.

**Objectives:** As a result of attending this workshop, participants will:
- Learn about the transition to adult life mandate under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act: specifically the procedural and substantive requirements for transition planning for post-graduation employment, post-secondary education and training, independent living and involvement in the community.
- Understand the unique challenges faced by an adolescents with
ASDs as they exit out of school-age educational programming and the benefit of an early start to transition planning.

- Be aware of different types of assessments and interventions for students with ASDs related to post-secondary training and education, employment, independent living and community participation.
- Demonstrate an awareness of resources to assist students with ASDs and their families in the transition to adult life process.

Ms. Mullaly is Coordinator of the Chestnut Hill Autism Initiative Network and a Special Education Mediator for the PA Office for Dispute Resolution. From 2007-2009, she served as special education legal counsel to the Pennsylvania Department of Education. In 2003-2007 and 2010-2011, she was a Special Education Hearing Officer assigned to 100+ due process matters. She works as an educational consultant and regularly presents on special education legal topics to public school professionals, parents, and attorneys throughout Pennsylvania. From 1991-2000, Ms. Mullaly represented school districts in special education matters developing extensive knowledge of claims under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. She received her B.A. Magna Cum Laude from St. Joseph’s University, and her law degree cum laude from Boston College Law School. She is the parent of an eleven-year old son with an autism spectrum disorder.
As the number of Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders continues to grow, so must we.

Chestnut Hill College’s professional certificate for people who work or live with adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders addresses the practical and emotional challenges of adults faced with the sometimes daunting task of everyday living. Please contact us at 215.248.7020 or gradadmissions@chc.edu to find out how our four-course program offered on Saturdays can help you make a real difference in the lives of this important and ever-growing population. www.chc.edu/graduate

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Providing guidance and support in school and career ages 14 to adult

“Together we can solve the puzzle”

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Green Tree School is a 50+ year old special needs institution specializing in Autism education and human services. We are a civic minded, caring community of devoted educators, and other professionals located in the historic Germantown section of Philadelphia. Yearly we serve up to 150 children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, serious emotional disturbances and preschool developmental delays. Our commitment to the children in our charge is extensive and heartfelt, as we teach and train through our individualized educational and therapeutic curriculums. Our programs focus on the acquisition of academic, personal, vocational and social skills necessary to enable students to succeed in school and the community at large.

Green Tree School prides itself on strategic alliances and community ties. We desire to build with like-minded institutions, non-profit organizations, government entities, philanthropy and businesses. We look forward to your continued involvement as Green Tree School celebrates 50 years of “Enhancing the lives of children and their families.” We warmly welcome you into the school community, and offer an open invitation to come tour the school for a visit.

Mission Statement: Green Tree School is dedicated to improving the quality of life for students with special needs and their families. We connect students to effective academic, therapeutic, personal and vocational services that enable success throughout the lifespan.

Vision Statement: Green Tree School will be the premiere provider in special needs education, services, and awareness. We are transforming the landscape of specialized education for students and families by using the best practices known to us.

Core Values:
• Every Child Learns
• Focus on Ability, not Disability
• Purposeful Partnerships
• Personalized Care

About Green Tree School: Green Tree School was founded on the belief that every child deserves a quality education, regardless of his or her special needs. Guided by this principle, we serve three distinct groups of students: school-age students with serious emotional disturbances, children and teens with Autism Spectrum Disorders and preschoolers with developmental delays. With campuses in the historic northwest section of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Green Tree is a non-profit, state licensed, Approved Private School serving up to 150 students annually. Our staff to student ratio (1:2.5) allows us to provide individualized therapeutic, vocational and educational services to students with extraordinary needs. In operation since 1957, Green Tree Schools holds the distinction of being the oldest school of this kind in Philadelphia. Visit us online: www.greentreeschool.org.

146 West Walnut Lane, Philadelphia, PA
36th Annual Autism Conference

For over 50 years, the Green Tree School has provided quality educational services for students with serious emotional and behavioral disabilities, and autism at our Germantown campus. Since July 2006, our Green Tree Partnerships program has taken our expertise into local schools and community agencies to help professionals there develop their services for special needs students. Through consultation, conferences, and workshops, GTP is helping Philadelphia-area schools build their capacities to educate all students and create safe, productive learning environments.

In our initial three years, the GTP team has been busy working with schools, behavioral health agencies and community-based programs to find innovative ways to support students with behavioral challenges. In all its partnerships, GTP is committed to customizing its services to fit the unique needs of programs and their students.

Recent GTP projects have included:

- Two well-received conferences on Autism featuring keynote addresses by psychologist/author Dr. Robert Naseef and author/mother of Temple Grandin, Eustacia Cutler
- All-faculty, all-day workshops in Pennsylvania and New Jersey schools on positive approaches to negative behaviors
- Workshop series on understanding Asperger’s Syndrome
- Ongoing on-site educational-behavioral consultation at charter schools within Philadelphia
- Ongoing behavioral consultation at after school programs in Philadelphia
- Program assessment and redesign at a special needs school
- Training on behavioral support for students with autism in residential treatment

Green Tree Partnerships is under the direction of Dr. Tom Latus who started and managed an outreach program for a treatment center outside Boston that has provided services to over 150 New England schools. In addition to Dr. Latus’ extensive experience in schools, GTP draws upon the outstanding clinical, educational, and administrative expertise of Green Tree’s seasoned staff and its wide network of consulting professionals.

Consultation Services: Our consultants offer many years of experience and in-depth educational and clinical expertise. The Green Tree approach is collaborative and data-driven, always aimed at achieving results. We work with educators to create interventions that solve seemingly intractable problems.

Professional Development Services: Green Tree Partnerships offers conferences, workshops and courses to assist schools in meeting the needs of students with challenging behaviors, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, and Severe Emotional Disorders. Our instructors are highly-experienced professionals with in-depth knowledge of best educational and clinical practices.

Contact tlatus@greentreeschool.org for more information or visit our website www.gtpartnerships.org.

The Autism Society, the nation’s leading grassroots autism organization, exists to improve the lives of all affected by autism. We do this by increasing public awareness about the day-to-day issues faced by people on the spectrum, advocating for appropriate services for individuals across the lifespan, and providing the latest information regarding treatment, education, research and advocacy.

Founded in 1965 by Dr. Bernard Rimland, Dr. Ruth Sullivan and many other parents of children with autism, the Autism Society is the leading source of trusted and reliable information about autism. Through its strong chapter network, the Autism Society has spearheaded numerous pieces of state and local legislation, including the 2006 Combating Autism Act, the first federal autism-specific law. The Autism Society’s website is one of the most visited websites on autism in the world and its quarterly journal has a broad national readership.

Please visit the Autism Society website for a variety of informational packets: www.autism-society.org. Many pamphlets are available. Of special interest to parents as well as educators are the following:

Building Our Future: Educating Students on the Autism Spectrum (For Teachers)

This 12 page publication provides information about working with students on the autism spectrum. Educators and school administrators provide the best educational services and supports when they become familiar with the learning styles of students with ASD and with the various educational approaches designed to meet their unique needs.

Next Steps: A Guide for Families New to Autism

This 8 page document is geared toward families who have just had a child diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. It provides a general understanding of the autism spectrum, an overview of the various treatment options, and brief information about education, services and supports that are helpful to children and adults on the autism spectrum.
**How Autism Affects our Lives:**

**Notes from a Local Family**

**Robbi Borine**

“I wish I could say it doesn’t but let’s get real here. You never fully realize the power an answer to a simple question is until you can’t get it. Like, “What hurts?” “How are you?” or “What do you want?” When your child with autism is grumpy, happy, crying, laughing or any combination of the above all you want is to know what is going on inside their head. With no answer a feeling of helplessness can easily overcome you. If you don’t know what’s wrong, how can you fix it? If you don’t know what’s so funny, how can you keep up the laughs? Every day you have to find new ways to break down the wall that autism puts up. Every day you have to fight to keep some kind of communication. Every day you have to trust that you and your child are doing everything possible to have a good and happy life!”

*Trevor’s Mom*

“Having a grandson with autism has made me a better person. I am much more aware of the trials of people I don’t even know that surround me. When I am in the presence of strangers, I think, do you have a child, grandchild, niece, or someone you love, who is facing challenges? My grandson lives 3000 miles away but I get to see him at least every three months. I get hugs, many kisses and a sweetness I know not everyone gets from him. This helps balance the worry I live with every single day about his future. Often I find myself obsessed with worrisome thoughts. I so admire my daughter for the way she balances her life with my grandson and his twin sister. My husband and I try to do anything we feel can make things a little easier for our daughter and her family. If I had to sum it up, it would be — the constant worry.”

*Trevor’s Grandmother*

“Having a grandson with autism has affected me in several profound ways. It has taught me to be more tolerant and accepting of persons with special needs. It has also increased my admiration for my daughter and all moms who have autistic or special needs children. On the downside, it has decreased my tolerance for those moms who have normal, healthy children and nannies for those children, yet are constantly complaining about how hard life is rearing their children. If they only had to walk in my daughter’s shoes for a day! It has also impacted my ability to retire. I need to continue working to help my daughter pay the many bills that come with a child with autism. I fortunately am also able to set up a trust for my grandson’s care as he reaches adulthood. The financial burden alone is devastating to families with children on the spectrum.”

*Trevor’s Grandfather*

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**Autism Defined**

**Christine DeLisi**

Autism is “a neurodevelopmental disorder that has recently gained the attention of public health, educators, and health care providers” (Twedell, 2008, p.55). According to the Autism Society of America [ASA], “Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and is the result of a neurological disorder that affects the normal functioning of the brain, impacting the development in the areas of social interaction, communication skills and interests” (2006, para.1). Some common characteristics involve difficulties in verbal and nonverbal communication, social interactions, and play activities (ASA, 2008). According to Heflin & Fiorino-Alaimo, the deviations of communication and socialization include:

- Absent or delayed verbal language
- Failure to use alternative forms of communication such as gesturing
- Using others as ‘tools’
- Echolalia (immediate or delayed)
- Pronoun reversal
- Difficulty understanding non-literal language
- Impairments in nonverbal communication
- Being oblivious to the presence of others
- Showing disregard for social conventions
- Failing to orient to another’s voice
- Lack of joint attention and social referencing
- Preferring to share only facts about favorite topics with others
- Having few reciprocal relationships (2007, p.5).

Individuals with Autism also display a narrow range of interests that are considered to be unusual by developmental standards (Heflin & Fiorino-Alaimo, 2007). Some of these restricted activities include: “unusual interests that are few in number, interests in parts of objects or isolated facts, and preservative engagement in favorite activities” (Heflin & Fiorino-Alaimo, 2007 p. 8).

Autism is one of the complex disorders that falls under the spectrum of Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD), which is a term for a category of neurological disorders that are characterized by “severe and pervasive impairment in several areas of development” (ASA, 2008, para. 2). Autism affects all individuals differently and to varying degrees (ASA, 2008). In addition to the diagnosis of Autism, there are four other subtypes of developmental disabilities that fall under the PDD umbrella which include: Asperger’s Syndrome, Rett’s Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative Fiorino-Alaimo, 2007). Rett’s Disorder is included under the PDD umbrella because individuals often show signs of autistic-like behaviors such as repetitive hand movements, toe walking, rocking, and sleep problems (The Autism Research Institute [ARI], 2008). Rett’s was first described by Andreas Rett as “a disorder that primarily affects females, as the genetic defect Disorder (CDD), and Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Not Otherwise Specified (PDD-NOS).”

According to Heflin and Fiorino-Alaimo (2007), Asperger’s Syndrome is characterized by “typical
Hans Asperger reported that children with Asperger’s tend to have a narrowly defined range of interests and are often preoccupied with specific toys (Heflin & Fiorino-Alaimo, 2007). Individuals with Asperger’s often have lucid speech before the age of 4 which can sometimes become repetitive (ARI, 2008). Their voices tend to be flat and seem emotionless (ARI, 2007). As found in the current criteria for the DSM-IVTR “Individuals with Asperger’s cannot show any delay in cognitive development or self-help skills” (Heflin & Fiorino-Alaimo, 2007, p. 13). Like individuals with Autism, people with Asperger’s often display various forms of self-stimulatory behavior and have difficulty understanding abstract thought (ARI, 2008).

Rett’s Disorder is distinct from others on the spectrum due to the fact that is now defined as a genetic disorder (Heflin & Fiorino-Alaimo, 2007). Rett’s Disorder is included under the PDD umbrella because individuals often show signs of autistic-like behaviors such as repetitive hand movements, toe walking, rocking, and sleep problems (The Autism Research Institute [ARI], 2008). Rett’s was first described by Andreas Rett as “a disorder that primarily affects females, as the genetic defect proves fatal in males” (Heflin & Fiorino-Alaimo, 2007, p. 15). There is a 6 to 18 month period of apparent normal development which is followed by a sudden loss of acquired skills (Heflin & Fiorino-Alaimo, 2007). The gene for this disorder, which was found on one of the two X chromosomes that determined sex, was located by Dr. Huda Zoghbi and her colleagues in 1999 (ARI, 2008).

Childhood Disintegrative Disorder was first identified by a special educator in 1908 named Theodore Heller. In order to receive a diagnosis of CDD, there must be significant evidence of typical growth and development until 2 years of age (Heflin & Fiorino-Alaimo, 2007). As stated by Heflin and Fiorino-Alaimo, “The child then must experience an immediate loss in at least two previously acquired skill areas, such as bowel or bladder control, adaptive behavior, expressive or receptive language, motor skills, social interaction, or play skills” (2007, p. 15). The core deficit for CDD is communication (Heflin & Fiorino-Alaimo, 2007). CDD seems to be more severe than autism even though the age of onset is later (Heflin & Fiorino-Alaimo, 2007).

References


Autism has been around for a very long time. In the early 1900s people showing autistic tendencies were placed in institutions. Doctors at the time believed autism to be a psychological disorder, somewhat like schizophrenia. The term “autism” is derived from Greek the word ‘autos’ meaning ‘self.’ Studies on people with autism show similar symptoms: the subject is withdrawn from social interaction and more involved with themselves.

In 1911 a Swiss psychiatrist first used the term ‘autistic’ Eugene Bleuler had been studying patients with mental deficiencies. He is best known for his work on schizophrenia and a way of diagnosing and communicating with those patients. In his work, he came across patients who seemed to be more interested in the fantasy world inside their own head then the world around them. He was the first to describe these patients as autistic.

Not much was said or done for patients with these ‘autistic’ behaviors until 1943. Leo Kanner studied eleven children who all seemed to have the same characteristics. He concluded that these children suffered from Autism. Around the same time, Hans Asperger studied four children with similar characteristics. He also labeled the children as Autistic. Neither study explained the causes of autism. In the 1950’s, Bruno Bettelheim, an Austrian psychologist attempted to identify the cause of Autism. Bettelheim had been studying the effects that Nazi guards had on the prisoners in concentration camps. He claimed that the prisoners and those with autism had very similar characteristics and traits. He concluded that the mothers of children with autism must be acting like Nazi guards. His beliefs became the prevailing theory about the cause of autism at the time. Mothers of children with autism became known as “Refrigerator Mothers” because Bettelheim believed that their lack of love and cold relations to their children caused autism.

In the 1960’s, Dr. Bernard Rimland, also studied children with autism. His study demonstrated that the cause of autism might be genetic. This was a breakthrough in the studies related to autism; however, it was not as popular a belief as the “Refrigerator Mother.” In the same decade as Rimland’s study, Bruno Bettelheim published documentation comparing mothers of autistic children to Nazi Concentration Camp Guards. Once again this fueled the blaming of mothers for causing autism. In 1969 the Autism Society of America was founded. The organization strived to publish the truth about the causes of autism. It continues to offer a network of information and supports. The Society now has a website at www.autism-society.org. Information on up-to-date research, real life stories of people living with autism, a summary of what autism is and an outreach for people wanting to know others who live with autism can be found here.

In the 1970s and 1980s, research continued to claim that autism was caused by one’s genetic make-up. A popular study had focused on a set of twins. After that study, autism was mentioned in the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) in 1980. It wasn’t until 1994, that autism was defined as we know it to be today in the fourth edition of the DSM.

Since the 1980’s much research has been conducted. Though some mothers may still feel guilt for
the way their autistic child behaves, the concept of the “Refrigerator Mother” has been dismissed. Recent studies are focusing on genetics and interventions that can be used in identifying and treating the symptoms of autism. More and more children are being diagnosed and at an early age. With so much research focusing on the causes, treatments and interventions, one can only hope that more questions will be answered, old and false beliefs will die off, and the general public will become more aware of the disorder.

Autism Timeline

EARLY 1900s
- 1911: Swiss psychiatrist, Eugene Bleuler, uses the term autistic to describe his patients.
- 1943: Leo Kanner published documentation on a study of eleven children he identified as autistic, stating the key identifier as emotional isolation.
- 1944: Hans Asperger published a documentation four children he studied. The children had the same symptoms as the children in Kanner’s study.
- 1950’s: An Austrian psychologist, Bruno Bettelheim publicized his beliefs regarding autism. His beliefs claimed that lack of parental love and concern was the primary cause of autism. His viewpoint characterized the term ‘Refrigerator Mother,’ which placed the blame for a child with autism solely on the mother. The term would haunt mothers who had children with autism for decades.
- 1964: Dr. Bernard Rimland publishes a book, which for the first time, suggests that autism is a biological disorder. His findings were not popular enough to replace the ‘Refrigerator Mother.’
- 1970s: A twin study completed by Drs. Susan Folstein and Michael Rutter publicly makes known a genetic basis for autism for the first time.
- 1980: Autism is added to the DSM.
- 1994: DSM IV is published, giving the medical community the definition that we use today for diagnosing Autism.
- 1997: Richard Pollack issues a biography on Bruno Bettelheim. In it, he exposes that Bettelheim coined the term ‘Refrigerator Mother’ without adequate evidence.
- 2002: The movie Refrigerator Mothers airs on PBS. The documentary explored the past beliefs about the cause of autism and gave the public more information about the disorder.

La Salle Initiative Supports Families Affected by Autism

The Need Is Great
A new urgency to understand Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has emerged as nearly 1.5 million Americans struggle to live with the neurological disorder.

“The reality is that children with autism are everywhere, and not all educators have the skill set to work with them,” said Frank Mosca, Chair of the Education Department. “The question is, how can our program help families who have to deal with it?” he said.

La Salle’s Answer
La Salle’s answer is the LADDER Family Center, or La Salle Autism and Developmental Disabilities Education Resources. According to Tonrey, the pieces began to fall into place last summer with guidance from Joe Donovan, Assistant Vice President for Marketing and Communications and an organizer of LADDER. “What we’re doing is quite unique,” she said. “Joe had a vision that we have the resources at La Salle to fundamentally contribute to a real need in our society to address autism.” The center fits seamlessly with La Salle’s mission to offer a practical education that benefits society. By coordinating its resources, the University developed a Certificate in Autism through the Education Department, an interdisciplinary initiative to support those affected by autism, and a spring autism conference.

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732 446 7610
www.aspennj.org/chapters_monmouth.asp
Contact: Ann Hiller, ann0912@aol.com

Alfred I. DuPont Hospital for Children
1600 Rockland Road, P.O. Box 269
Wilmington, DE 19803
302 651 4511
www.nemours.org/hospital/de/aidhc
Accepts some insurance.
Contact: Rhonda S. Walter, M.D.

Asperger Syndrome Education Network (ASPEN)
Monmouth County Adult Issues Chapter
Manalapan Parks and Recreation Center
120 Rt. 522, Manalapan, NJ 07726
609 409 1007
www.aspennj.org/chapters_monmouth.asp
Contact: Mary Laresch, info@aspennj.org

Asperger Syndrome Education Network (ASPEN)
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 Flemington, NJ
908 236 6153
www.aspennj.org

Autism Delaware
5572 Kirkwood Highway,
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302 472 2638 | 302 472 2639
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www.delautism.org
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Autism Sharing & Parenting
Philadelphia, PA
215 413 7106
www.autismsharingandparenting.org
nasya06@msn.com

The Center for Independent Living in Bucks County
One Oxford Valley, Suite 318
2300 E. Lincoln Hwy
Langhorne, PA 19047
215 752 7101
www.cilbc.org
Contact: Glenn Coyle- SWATCO/Director of Community Impact, gcioyle@cilbc.org

Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia
South 34th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104
215 590 1719
www.chop.edu

The Comprehensive Autism Center at Delaware Valley Children’s Center
2288 Second Street Pike, Suite 6
Newtown, PA 19040
215 598 0223
Fax: 215 598 9020
www.delvalchildrenscenter.org
Complete assessments and intervention plans for children, and peripheral educational and group services for parents and siblings, including social skills clubs, parent groups and Parents Night Out.
Contact: Fran Bradley
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Dakhari Psychological Services, LLC
1949 Route 70 E / Suite 9-B
Cherry Hill, NJ 08003
856 796 3392
Fax: 856 689 1419
www.DakhariPsyc.com
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Delaware County Parent Support Group
4785 Park Lane, Aston, PA 19014
610 485 3627
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Delco Family P.A.S.S.
PDD/Autism Spectrum Support
PO Box 210, Drexel Hill, PA 19026
610 626 9511
www.delcofamilypass.com
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FACES Support Group, Hammonton Chapter
385 North St, Hammonton, NJ 08037
609 567 0588
Meetings are held the 1st Wednesday of the month at the Hammonton ECEC School.
Contact: Colleen Lockwood
faceshammonton@yahoo.com

Family Resources for Autism
1520 Locust St, Philadelphia, PA 19102
215 735 0803
Fax: 215 735 2450
www.varietyautism.org

Genodus Support Group
281 S. 57th Street, Philadelphia , PA 19139
215 474 9345
17-24 year olds
Contact: Leslie Thompson
workshop202@yahoo.com

HiTops
21 Wiggins Street, Princeton, NJ
609 683 5155 ext. 234
www.hitops.org
ecasparian@HiTops.org

New Behavioral Network
2060 Springdale Road, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003
856 874 1616
Fax: 856 424 7660
www.newbehavioralnetwork.com
along@nbngroup.com

(PACT) Parents of Autistic Children Together
10 Shadow Oak Court
Mount Laurel, TN 08054
865 234 1294
www.solvingthepuzzle.com
Contact: Dawn Olson, aldawno@comcast.net

Penn Foundation Behavioral Health Services
807 Lawn Avenue, P.O. Box 32
Sellersville, PA 18960
215 453 5178 ext. 256
www.pennfoundation.org
Contact: Debra Springer
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(SPEC) Special Parents ~ Exceptional Children
283 Wilson Road, Turnersville, NJ 08012
609 352 1667
Meetings are held on the third Sunday of every month at St. James Lutheran Church Corner of Columbus Blvd & Woodbury Glassboro Rd. Pitman, NJ at 7pm.
Contact: Bridget Celia
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Sibshop
School Social Worker Autistic Support Program
705 Shady Retreat Road, Doylestown, PA 18901
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Sibshop
Children’s Seashore House
The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia
Room 438B, 3400 Civic Center Blvd.
Philadelphia, PA 19104
215 590 7443
Contact: Lenore Stern, MSS, LSW
stern@email.chop.edu
**Adaptive Behavior (AB)** The capability to familiarize oneself with new environments, people, and things while learning routines which allow coping with those new situations (Exkorn, 2005).

**Advocate** Individual who promotes or reforms a cause that benefits an individual or groups, as in educational advocate (Exkorn, 2005).

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** Signed in 1990, this law legally forbids discrimination against people with disabilities in the areas of jobs, housing, and public service (Exkorn, 2005).

**American Sign Language (ASL)** A system of communication for deaf adults through gestures, hand signals, and finger spelling. Prevalent in North America (Exkorn, 2005).

**Annual Goals** A set of reasonable expectations for pupils in a period of one year, as documented in the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) (Exkorn, 2005).

**Annual Review** A re-examination of every 12-month period of a pupil’s IEP to determine if changes should be made in next year’s IEP (Exkorn, 2005).

**Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)** Is the design, implementation, and evaluation of environmental modifications to produce socially significant improvement in human behavior. ABA includes the use of direct observation, measurement, and functional analysis of the relations between environment and behavior. ABA uses antecedent stimuli and consequences, based on the findings of descriptive and functional analysis, to produce practical change. ABA is based on the belief that an individual’s behavior is determined by past and current environmental events in conjunction with organic variables such as genetics. Thus, it focuses on explaining behavior in terms of external events that can be manipulated rather than internal constructs that are beyond our control (NetworkSolutions, 2009).

**Aphasia** The loss of ability to implement or comprehend language. Condition may be complete or partial (Exkorn, 2005).

**Apraxia** A disorder in which the individual suffers partial or total loss of voluntary movement, while retaining muscular power and coordination. Disorder most frequently affects speech (Exkorn, 2005).

**Assessment** Includes tests and observations to determine a child’s areas of strengths and weaknesses. Usually performed by an interdisciplinary team of professionals and parent to determine special education needs. Also called an evaluation (Exkorn, 2005).

**Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)** A neurological disorder marked by a severe shortness of attention span, cognitive disorganization, and sometimes hyperactivity (ADHD) (Exkorn, 2005).

**Auditory** Relating to hearing skills and abilities (Exkorn, 2005).

**Auditory Processing** The capability to understand aural stimuli, both words and nonverbal sounds (Exkorn, 2005).
**Autism Spectrum Disorders**  Encompasses the following five disorders as defined in the DSM-IV-TR: Autistic Disorder, Asperger’s Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, Rett’s Disorder and Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (Exkorn, 2005).

**Autistic Savant**  A person who expresses extraordinary mental abilities, often in the fields of numerical calculation, art, or music, but usually set within the context of autism or mental retardation (Exkorn, 2005).

**Autism**  A condition marked by developmental delay in social skills, language and behavior. Can present itself in varying degrees of severity (Exkorn, 2005)

**Baseline**  The congenital level of function by a child before instruction is introduced (Exkorn, 2005).

**Behavior Modification**  Is the use of empirically demonstrated behavior change techniques to improve behavior, such as altering an individual’s behaviors and reactions to stimuli through positive and negative reinforcement of adaptive behavior and/or the reduction of maladaptive behavior through punishment and/or therapy (Wikipedia, 2009)

**Behaviorist or Behavior Therapist**  Certified individual who analyzes behaviors and designs and implements behavioral treatment programs to teach new skills (Exkorn, 2005).

**Childhood Disintegrative Disorder**  A rare form of pervasive developmental disorder in which normally developing children suddenly lose language and social skills after age three (Exkorn, 2005).

**Cognitive**  Describes the process used for the tasks of remembering, reasoning, understanding, and using judgment; in special education, a cognitive disability refers to difficulty in learning (Exkorn, 2005).

**Communication Notebook**  A notebook used by parents and teachers of a special education student, designed to facilitate daily communication between the two parties on student progress (Exkorn, 2005).

**Comprehensive Evaluation**  A complete assessment of a child, based on his psychological, educational, social, and health stats. Usually conducted by a team of professionals and complemented by information from parents and teachers (Exkorn, 2005).

**Consequence**  The direct result of action or effort. Consequences can be either pleasant and reinforcing or unpleasant and punishing (Exkorn, 2005).

**Cue**  Stimulus that prompts a behavior or activity in an individual (Exkorn, 2005).

**Developmental Disability (DD)**  A handicap or impairment which occurs before the age of eighteen months and is expected to persist indefinitely. This includes pervasive developmental disorders, cerebral palsy, and mental retardation (Exkorn, 2005).

**Developmental Milestone**  A standard of growth against which one measures the progress of an individual or group over time (Exkorn, 2005).

**Diagnosis**  The name of the disorder identified after an evaluation (Exkorn, 2005).


**Discrete Trial**  Part of ABA therapy, a trial is a sequence composed of three parts: a direction, a behavior, and a consequence (Exkorn, 2005).

**Due Process Hearing**  A hearing at which parents present evidence that the school district is not properly educating their child (Exkorn, 2005).

**Early Intervention (EI)**  A collection of services provided by public and private agencies and designed by law to support eligible children and families in enhancing a child’s potential for growth and development from birth to age three (Exkorn, 2005).

**Echolalia**  A condition in which an individual repeats words or phrases previously heard. Delayed echolalia can occur days or weeks after initially hearing the word or phrase (Exkorn, 2005).

**Evaluation Criteria**  A component of the IEP. Provides a description of how the results of a pupil’s IEP will determine the achievement of standard goals. Methods of obtaining information include teacher observation, interview with parents and standardized tests (Exkorn, 2005).

**Expressive Language**  The language used to communicate to others. Oral expressive language is the child’s expression of thoughts and feelings through oral speech. Expressive language also refers to gestures and signing, as well as communication through objects, pictures, and writing (Exkorn, 2005).

**Extended School Year (ESY)**  Educational services specially crafted for students who need them beyond the regular school year. Not to be confused with summer school or year-round school (Exkorn, 2005).

**Fine Motor Skills**  Activities that require the coordination of smaller body muscles, especially those of the hand, such as writing and drawing (Exkorn, 2005).

**Fragile X Syndrome**  A genetic cause of mental retardation, in which one part of the X-Chromosome is defective (Exkorn, 2005).

**Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)**  A program which mandates the provision of public school services to all school-aged children (up to age twenty-one, even if disabled) (Exkorn, 2005).

**Functional Analysis**  The evaluation of individual behaviors through observation of what happens before and after the behavior occurs. Behaviors are further assessed for their appropriateness to the situation and to the individual (Exkorn, 2005).

**General Education**  A curriculum of the arts and sciences courses that provides students with a broad educational experiences. A general education school can include inclusion programs for children with ASDs, where children with ASDs are integrated into classes with typically developing children (Exkorn, 2005).

**Generalization**  The ability to learn a skill in one situation and be able to apply it to other situations (Exkorn, 2005).

**Genetic**  Inherited (Exkorn, 2005).

**Gross Motor Skills**  Body movements which utilize larger muscle group of the body, such as sitting,
walking and jumping (Exkorn, 2005).

**High Functioning Autism (HFA)** Although not officially recognized as a diagnostic category, HFA refers to individuals with ASDs who have near-average to above-average cognitive abilities and can communicate through receptive and expressive language (Exkorn, 2005).

**Hyperactive** A condition marked by chronic restlessness and the inability to concentrate for any length of time. Could be evidence of an attention deficit disorder (Exkorn, 2005).

**Hypersensitivity** Excessive, often painful, reaction to everyday auditory, visual, or tactile stimuli such as bright lights or loud noises (Exkorn, 2005).

**Hypoosensitivity** A marked absence of reaction to everyday stimuli (Exkorn, 2005).

**Identification** Evaluation of child as a candidate for special education services. Process requires proper screening and assessment to confirm whether child has an ASD or another disorder (Exkorn, 2005).

**Independent Education Evaluation (IEE)** Assessment of child requested by parent who believes that the school did not conduct a proper evaluation. In some instances, this evaluation may be conducted at the school’s expense (Exkorn, 2005).

**Individual Education Plan (IEP)** A plan which facilitates the transfer of a student from one setting to another, such as to a classroom, school, or work environment (Exkorn, 2005).

**Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)** Documents and guides the early intervention process for children with disabilities and their families, in accordance with Part C of the IDEA. Through the IFSP process, families and service providers work together as a team to plan, implement, and evaluate services to meet the specific needs of the child and family (Exkorn, 2005).

**Individual Transition Plan (ITP)** A plan which facilitates the transfer of a student from one setting to another, such as to a classroom, school or work environment (Exkorn, 2005).

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** A federal law originally passed in 1975 that requires states to establish performance goals and indicators for children with disabilities consistent with the maximum extent appropriate with other goals and standards for all children established by the state and to report on progress toward meeting those goals. IDEA states that children with disabilities must be included in state and district-wide assessments of student progress with individual modifications and accommodations as needed. IDEA promotes improved educational results for children with disabilities through early intervention, preschool, and educational experiences that prepare them for later educational challenges and employment (Exkorn, 2005).

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA)** The IDEA of 1997 has been reauthorized and is now known as the IDEIA 2004, effective July 1, 2005. The goal of IDEIA 2004 is to help children learn better by promoting accountability for results, enhancing parent involvement, using proven practices and materials, providing more flexibility, and reducing paperwork burdens for teachers, states, and local school districts (Exkorn, 2005).

**Instructional Strategies** Specific methods and materials employed in teaching the pupil (Exkorn, 2005).

**Interdisciplinary Team** A group of professionals from different disciplines (psychologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, etc.) who assess a child and develop a comprehensive plan to address his needs (Exkorn, 2005).

**Intervention** Action taken to attain an individual’s developmental potential. The term is often used synonymously with Treatment (Exkorn, 2005).

**Joint Attention or Shared Attention** A social skill which develops early in typically developing children, in which two people—usually a young child and an adult—jointly observe an object or event and share the experience. This skill is crucial to later language and social development. Often referred to as Shared Attention (Exkorn, 2005).

**Language Impairment** A condition marked by difficulty in understanding and/or using language (Exkorn, 2005).

**Learning Disabled (LD)** Having a compromised learning ability, manifested by a severe discrepancy between the student’s intellectual ability and his level of academic achievement in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening, reading and writing comprehension, and mathematics calculation or reasoning (Exkorn, 2005).

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)** The requirement under the IDEA that all children receiving special education must be educated to the fullest extent possible with children who do not have disabilities (Exkorn, 2005).

**Mainstreaming** The concept that students with disabilities should be integrated with their nondisabled peers to the maximum extent possible, when appropriate to the needs of the child with a disability. Mainstreaming is one point on a continuum of educational options. The term is sometimes used synonymously with inclusion and integration (Exkorn, 2005).

**Mediation** A resolution process. If parents disagree with the school district on providing services for a child with disabilities, a third party mediator will be assigned to help both parties resolve the issue (Exkorn, 2005).

**Mental Retardation (MR)** A classification based upon three criteria: intellectual functioning level below 70, based on IQ test; significant limitation in two or more adaptive skill areas (e.g., communication, self-care, home living, social skills, self-health and safety, academics); and the presence of intellectual limitations from childhood (since the age of 18 or earlier) (Exkorn, 2005).

**Motor** Muscle activity—especially voluntary muscle activity—and consequent body movements (Exkorn, 2005).

**Motor Planning** The brain’s ability to conceive, organize, and execute a sequence of complex physical actions (Exkorn, 2005).

**Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MDT)** A group of people who evaluate the abilities and needs of a child to determine whether the child meets eligibility criteria for special needs (Exkorn, 2005).
**Modeling**  Observing and imitating another’s behaviors and actions to copy them in one’s own actions (Exkorn, 2005).

**No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**  An act signed in 2002 to reform schools by encouraging stronger accountability for results, more freedom for states and communities, proven education methods, and more choices for parents. Under No Child Left Behind, states are working to close the achievement gap and make sure all students, including those who are disadvantaged, achieve academic proficiency. Annual state and school district report cards inform parents and communities about state and school progress. Schools that do not make progress will provide supplemental services, such as free tutoring or after-school assistance; take corrective actions, and, if still not making adequate yearly progress after five years, make dramatic changes to the way the school is run (Exkorn, 2005).

**Norm Referenced Tests**  Measurement of a child’s performance as compared to others the same age (Exkorn, 2005).

**Neurotypical (NT)**  Description applicable to a person who does not suffer from a neurodevelopmental disorder such as an ASD. Often referred to as typical (Exkorn, 2005).

**Objectives**  The intermediate steps that must be taken to reach the annual goals; a component of the IEP (Exkorn, 2005).

**Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)**  A psychiatric disorder characterized by obsession thoughts and compulsive behavior (Exkorn, 2005).

**Occupational Therapy (OT)**  A therapy that focuses on improving the development of fine and gross motor skills, sensory integration skills, and daily living skills (Exkorn, 2005).

**Oral Motor**  Movement of the muscles located in and around the mouth (Exkorn, 2005).

**Perseverative Behavior**  Repetitive movements, speech or play patterns, such as repeatedly opening and closing doors or eye tracking (Exkorn, 2005).

**Physical Therapy (PT)**  A therapy that specialized in the improvement of developing motor skills, with an emphasis on gross motor skills (Exkorn, 2005).

**Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)**  A communication system for nonverbal or functionally nonverbal individuals, especially for young children with ASDs. For example, PECS allows a child to exchange a picture cared for something he or she wants (Exkorn, 2005).

**Prompt**  A stimulus or cue given to help a child complete a task. Prompts may be physical, partial, gestural, verbal, visual, or location-appropriate (Exkorn, 2005).

**Proprioception**  A sense that informs us of the position of our body parts (Exkorn, 2005).

**Receptive Language**  The comprehension of spoken and written communication and gestures (Exkorn, 2005).

**Reinforcement**  A positive event that follows and action, thereby creating in the doer a pleasant feeling and increasing the likelihood that the action will be repeated. For example, reinforcement can occur by rewarding the individual with a toy, token, food treat, or social praise for a good behavior (Exkorn, 2005).

**Reinforcer**  Anything positive that follows a behavior and increases that behavior, including social praise, desire food, or toys. Conversely, a negative reinforcer will decrease behavior, as it prompts a reaction that the person will try to avoid (Exkorn, 2005).

**Referral**  The request to identify and assess a child’s special education needs, usually made by a parent, teacher or medical personnel (Exkorn, 2005).

**Related Services**  Auxiliary services for a disabled child, such as transportation, occupational, physical and speech pathology services, interpreters, and medical services (Exkorn, 2005).

**Relationship Development Intervention (RDI)**  A program that employs specific exercises and activities to teach interpersonal social skills (Exkorn, 2005).

**Remediation**  In special education, programming which improves the student’s performance.

**Rett’s Disorder**  Features reduced heard growth and usually profound cognitive delays. An extremely rare genetic disorder affecting only girls (Exkorn, 2005).

**Self-Contained Class**  Classroom specially designed for special education students (Exkorn, 2005).

**Self-Stimulatory Behavior**  Actions used solely to stimulate one’s own senses, such as body rocking and finger flicking. Sometimes self-stimulatory behavior can create an arousal state. Other examples include hand flapping, toe walking, spinning, and echolalia. Often referred to as stimming (Exkorn, 2005).

**Sensorimotor**  Voluntary movement and senses like sight, touch, and hearing. Pertaining to brain activity other than automatic functions (respiration, circulation, sleep) or cognition (Exkorn, 2005).

**Sensory Defensiveness**  Involves a group of symptoms that signal an overreaction to stimuli. These include patterns of avoidance, sensory seeking, fear, anxiety, and even aggression (Exkorn, 2005).

**Sensory Integration (SI)**  The harmonic organization of parts of the nervous system so that an individual can effectively interact with the environment (Exkorn, 2005).

**Sensory Integration Therapy**  Treatment focused on improving the way the brain processes and organizes the senses. Therapy is implemented by an occupational therapist and involves full-body movements that provide vestibular, proprioceptive, and tactile stimulation (Exkorn, 2005).

**Shaping**  Reinforcing behavior in successive approximations until desired behavior is attained (Exkorn, 2005).

**Social Skills**  Positive, situation-appropriate behaviors that are necessary to communicate, interact, and form relationships with others (Exkorn, 2005).

**Special Education (SPED)**  Specialized and personalized instruction of a disables child, designed in response to educational disabilities determined by team evaluation (Exkorn, 2005).
Speech Language Impairment (SLI) Diminished communication or complete absence of speech or language (Exkorn, 2005).

Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP or S-LP) A qualified professional who improves communication skills as well as oral motor abilities (Exkorn, 2005).

Stereotypy/Stereotypic Behavior Purposeless movement or speech in children with ASDs, such as hand flapping or echolalia, which are repetitive and odd. Also referred to as perseveration (Exkorn, 2005).

Stim/Stimming See “Self-Stimulatory Behavior” (Exkorn, 2005).

Syndrome A condition characterized by a group of co-occurring symptoms that have a recognizable and uniform effect on a group of individuals (Exkorn, 2005).

Tactile Pertaining to the sense of touch on the skin (Exkorn, 2005).

Tactile Defensiveness A marked overreaction to touch by a child (Exkorn, 2005).

Target Skill An isolate task selected by a teacher or student for accomplishment (Exkorn, 2005).

Transition Plan A plan that details services and accommodations provided to children with disabilities when moving from early intervention services to preschool, and from home school to the work setting at age twenty-one. Required under IDEA (Exkorn, 2005).

Transitions The changes from one environment to another, such as from an early childhood program to school. Transitions may also refer to changes from one activity to another (Exkorn, 2005).

Trigger An event that precipitates a certain behavior (Exkorn, 2005).

Vestibular Pertaining to the sensory system located on the inner ear that governs posture and balance (Exkorn, 2005).

Visual Discrimination The ability to distinguish and detect differences in objects, forms, letters, or words (Exkorn, 2005).

Visual Motor The skill and dexterity required to complete a task, such as fitting a piece into a puzzle or a key into a keyhole (Exkorn, 2005).

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This year’s conference logo was inspired by Green Tree School student Gage F.

Thank you Gage!